



# JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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## Boswelliana

With the kind permission of Edward Aswell of McGraw-Hill Book Co. we are able to report on the future plans for the Boswell edition. The next volume, upon which Fred Pottle is working at top speed, will be devoted to Boswell's Grand Tour on the Continent. Following directly the spectacularly successful 1762-63 London Journal, it should be almost as fascinating, for it will include Boswell's flirtation with Zélide, the visits to Rousseau and Voltaire, his Italian adventures, and probably large portions of the Corsican journal. So far as possible, it will be a sustained chronological account, made up not only from the surviving journals but also from Boswell's correspondence. Present plans call for the appearance of this volume in the Spring of 1952.

As rapidly as possible, following this second volume, the other journals will appear in the proper sequence. Meanwhile, other important works will be sandwiched in between the journals. For example, immediately following the Grand Tour volume Ted Hilles will bring out a small collection of the hitherto unprinted manuscripts of Sir Joshua Reynolds, largely from the Boswell collection. Many of you will remember that one of the gems of the so-called cattle barn Malahide Castle discovery was Reynolds's amazing characterization of Goldsmith, in which a sample is given of Goldsmith's manner of telling a story. Your editor, for one, can hardly wait to have this superb anecdote available to read to classes.

The first part of Pottle's long awaited biography of Boswell will be issued when the editions of the journals reach the point at which the first volume of the biography ends. No specific plans have yet been made for the printing of the great mass of Boswell's correspondence.

It is disappointing to report that because of copyright difficulties McGraw-Hill will not be able to issue in this country the promised limited edition of the *London Journal*. Printed in England by Heinemann, it is scheduled to appear sometime this summer. So keen is the general interest in Boswell that this limited edition of 980 copies has already been several times over-subscribed, and there will undoubtedly be a lively scramble for copies. The only way for an American to get into the *melée* will be through a British dealer.

The amazing progress of the *London Journal* continues. For some time second in the national list of non-fiction best sellers, it is still way up among the leaders. In the United States there are now over 350,000 copies in print, including those taken by the Book-of-the-Month Club: in Great Britain there are over 80,000, including those for the English Book Society. And the demand abroad is so great that each new printing is sold out almost before it can reach the bookstores.

The first complete translation of the *London Journal* will be into Danish — to be published by Martins Forlag, Copenhagen. It is hoped that this will be ready by next February. The journal is to be reproduced in braille for the London Institute for the Blind.

For the record, we might also note the condensation of the journal in the March *Omni* book, with most of the spice left out of the text, yet with a lurid cover showing Boswell making fervent love to Louise. Hamilton Basso's account of the Boswell Papers which appeared last fall in *Life* has been condensed in the *Reader's Digest* for March.

Of some recent reviews we might merely mention that by Dr. Russell Brain in *Adelphi* for the First Quarter, 1951, where Boswell's sexual vagaries and his constant doubts concerning his own virility are explained in terms of his relationship with his father. We want also to express our delight in Louis Kronenberger's editorial "Meet Mr. Boswell" which appeared in *Life* for January 15th.

Just received is another brief retelling of the legend of the Boswell papers, this time by S. C. Roberts in *British Book News* for April. It is important for the record since Roberts tells, for the first time in print we believe, of his own visit to Malahide Castle in June 1926, shortly before Ralph Isham appeared on the scene. Roberts was shown some of the manuscripts, but his offer to help in any problems of editing or of publication was politely declined. Future historians of the fabulous Boswell papers must fit this new episode into its proper place in the story.

### A Query

Lyman Butterfield (Princeton Univ. Library) is interested in finding out all he can about Edward and Charles Dilly, Boswell's publishers. He writes: "It has long seemed surprising to me that no collection of the Dilly's papers has ever shown up. They died eminent and prosperous and must have left a mass of letters and papers." Do any of you know of the existence of any papers or clues connected with this problem? If so, please let Butterfield know at once.

We might add that Butterfield has just been appointed Director of the Institute of Early American History and Culture at Williamsburg, Virginia. But he insists that he still hopes to maintain contact with both the Jefferson edition and his Johnsonian friends. It will be one of his chief purposes, he adds, in his new post to promote "cross-cultural studies of all sorts" and to break down "the barriers which have unfortunately grown up between English and American studies in the 17th and 18th centuries."

### A Query That Clicked

You may remember that in our last we complained about the number of queries appearing from time to time in the *JNL* which went unanswered. Now we can report that one, at least, was immediately successful. In the February number we passed on a request for information concerning some manuscripts of Lady Winchilsea once in the possession of Sir Edmund Gosse. Within a week we had a letter from Ruth H. Blunt (914 Fillmore St., Lynchburg, Va.) giving all the necessary information. The papers are now in the Folger Library, Washington, D.C. This time through the *JNL* the querying scholar, D.G. Neill of New College, Oxford, had his answer in

less than a month.

## Pope Scholarship

One of the most important recent contributions to eighteenth-century scholarship is Maynard Mack's edition of the *Essay on Man*. As Volume III, Part I, of the Twickenham edition, it is another milestone in the new evaluation of Augustan poetry. As Mack points out, even with the rising reputation of Pope's satirical works the old objections to the *Essay on Man* have often been repeated parrot-like — that the poem is badly constructed, that it is merely a hodge-podge of ideas picked up from Bolingbroke and others of Pope's friends. "It is ironical," he adds, "that the poem of Pope's which is most perfect in its formal unity and the most impressive in its theme should be the one least known in our own age." In his own admirable Introduction Mack sets out to change all this, to destroy the old false impressions. By close critical analysis of structure and content, and by the collection of useful analogues, he makes clear the artistic plan, as well as the strong traditionalism of the poem. At last the *Essay on Man* is receiving adequate critical treatment from our age.

We have not had so much time to examine F. W. Bateson's edition of the *Epistles to Several Persons (Moral Essays)*, Vol. III, Part II, which has just arrived. We are sure that Bateson has done an excellent job of editing, and everyone will welcome this annotated modern printing of some of Pope's best poetry. With the appearance of these two parts of Vol. III, there are now only two more volumes in the Twickenham series to appear: Audra's edition of the early poems, and Ault's of the miscellaneous shorter poems. We might add that the Yale University Press will in the future distribute copies of the Twickenham edition in the United States.

If any of you have the notion that the life of an editor is not adventurous, hearken to what Geoffrey Tillotson has to say of his latest assignment. He writes: "Revising the text of Ault's volume for the Twickenham edition, Butt needs to have the exact text of Pope's inscriptions on the monuments in Westminster Abbey. I'm deputed to climb scaffolding next Monday. If I lose my life in the attempt (some of the inscriptions are up in the triforium, I hear) I know I can count on the *JNL* to report my cause aright to the unsatisfied."

We are delighted to see a copy of Tillotson's *On the Poetry of*

*Pope*, republished by the Clarendon Press in 1950, after having been out of print for over a decade. Because of the method of reproduction, only a very few changes have been made in the original text. In any event, it is fortunate to have easily available again this pioneer in the new criticism of Pope's art. We can report also that Methuen is getting ready to reprint Tillotson's edition of *The Rape of the Lock*, Volume II of the Twickenham series. Although it is to be reproduced by photographic process, the editor hopes to make a large number of small changes and corrections, in order to have the volume as correct as possible.

An interesting inexpensive (35¢) selection of some of Pope's poems has been issued by Penguin Books. Douglas Grant (Toronto) has made the selection and has provided also a judicious and sympathetic Introduction of fourteen pages.

For an attack on Pope in the old tradition, see Maurice M. Shudofsky, "A Dunce Objects to Pope's Dictatorship" [a contemporary blast by Charles Johnson] in *Huntington Library Quart.*, February 1951.

### Miscellaneous News Items

May we again express our thanks to N. Lester, who so kindly provided the subject index to the first ten volumes of *JNL*. His labor of love should save many of you trouble and time — that is, if you ever want to look up some item in our earlier issues.

A special 6000 volume library of English literature has been given to U.C.L.A. by the late Frederic T. Blanchard. Included is his collection of Henry Fielding. In order to keep up the library he also left an endowment fund of \$45,000 to be used for the purpose of buying 18th-century books.

William Lamont (Rutgers Univ.) has been working on the plot of *Tom Jones*. Because he believes other enthusiasts may be stimulated by some of his highly controversial findings, he has had mimeographed some pages entitled "Fielding's Craftsmanship in the Mystery of Tom Jones' Parentage." These he will gladly send to anyone willing to pay 50¢ toward the cost of mimeographing. Address him care English Dept., Rutgers Univ., New Brunswick, N.J.

Dick Boys points out to us that a recent mystery story, *Sudden Vengeance* by Edmund Crispin, has to do with the making of a movie about Pope's "Unfortunate Lady." As you may imagine, the lines "On all the line a sudden vengeance waits, And frequent hearses

shall besiege your gates" become one of the foreboding themes.

Wilson Hudson (Texas) comments that he has on hand "quite a bit of material on the knowledge of the Ossianic Cycle among non-Gaelic speakers before Macpherson began to publish." At the recent M.L.A. meetings in New York he read a paper having to do with "History, Fiction, and the Discovery of Irish Literature," and is planning other related researches.

Fritz Liebert writes: "Have you seen the letter put out by the *Great Books of the Western World* people (The Univ. of Chicago and the Encyclopedia Britannica) advertising the subscriber's edition, featuring, at \$500, the offer that Chancellor Hutchins will autograph the first volume! But the best part is the following: 'The idea of sponsoring subscribers is not a new one in publishing. Dr. Johnson depended upon charter subscribers to bring out the first edition of his famous Dictionary.' Among the great ideas that seem not to have percolated through the Chicago mind is the blow S.J. struck for authorship by public support."

Curt Zimansky is back in the army, stationed in Washington.

A new and completely authentic recording of all of the *Beggar's Opera* is now being made under the direction of Max Goberman. In our next issue we will hope to have further information for you.

Concerning the recent appeal for the Gough Square Johnson House we have had numerous letters — a fine appreciation from Robert D. Horn (Oregon), unfortunately too long to include here, and a splendid editorial by Donald Grant in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* of February 25. This last was sent to us by Bob Schmitz.

The Princeton University Library has on display a collection of prints and manuscripts relating to Mrs. Thrale-Piozzi, formed by the late Wilton Lloyd-Smith.

M. F. Heiser (Iowa) is to be at the University of Edinburgh this summer studying Scottish-American cultural relations in the eighteenth century. He offers to do small research jobs in Edinburgh for any of our readers.

The latest issue of the Augustan Reprint Society is Thomas Baker's *The Fine Lady's Airs* (1709), with an Introduction by John Harrington Smith (U.C.L.A.).

E.P. Dandridge, Jr. (Lynchburg College) writes that he is doing research on literary criticism in British periodicals from the demise of the *Guardian* (1715) to 1750.

We are pleased to receive the latest *New Rambler*, the official journal of the Johnson Society of London. No. 18, January 1951, it contains numerous interesting bits of news, as well as the conclusion of Margaret Barton's essay on Garrick and Johnson.

### Otway's Plays

For all those interested in Restoration and 18th-Century drama, and for all those happy persons who revel in pictures and descriptions of actors and actresses, Aline Mackenzie Taylor's (*Tulane*) *Next to Shakespeare* will come as a welcome addition (Duke Univ. Press, \$6.00). Sometimes it is hard for us to realize what a hold plays like *The Orphan* and *Venice Preserved* had on the English theatre-going public. Yet for nearly two centuries they held their place in the repertory; and Goldsmith could call Otway *Next to Shakespeare*, the greatest dramatist England had produced in tragedy. The principal roles in the plays were eagerly sought after by every great actor and actress. Aline Mackenzie Taylor traces the stage history of the plays and gives a mass of information about the various productions. Excellently illustrated and attractively printed, her book is handsome and informative.

### Johnson's Revisions

Fritz Liebert (Yale) writes: "It is no longer necessary to correct the erroneous belief that Johnson did not revise his writings when opportunity offered; indeed, it is hardly possible to find any extended work that passed under his hand for a second time without amendment. To the more important examples already recorded by others a trivial one may perhaps be added. The character of Collins that Johnson wrote for Fawkes' *Poetical Calendar* in 1763 he reprinted eighteen years later as a part of his account of Collins in the *Lives of the Poets*. Even here he exercised his critical faculties; aside from those changes that may have been introduced by the printer, there are others that must pretty plainly have been made by Johnson himself. 'But dilligence is never wholly lost' becomes 'Yet as dilligence is never wholly lost.' 'Clouds which he found gathering' becomes 'Clouds which he perceived gathering.' The year of the poet's death, lacking from the earlier account, is supplied in the later. An awkwardly repeated 'then' is deleted. Here is further evidence, however slight, that Johnson did not disdain the muddling work of minute

textual improvement."

## New Johnsonian Publications

Since the November issue there have been numerous articles and books worthy of notice. We wish there were space for specific comments.

Ian Jack, "The 'Choice of Life' in Johnson and Matthew Prior," *JEGP* for October 1950; Harold H. Scudder, "Dr. Johnson at Chatsworth," *N&Q* for Oct. 28; H. Clifford-Smith, "Dr. Johnson's House" [Gough Square], *Apollo* for November and December; D.J. Greene, "'Sooth' in Keats, Milton, Shakespeare and Dr. Johnson," *MLN* for December; A.D. Atkinson, "Dr. Johnson and Science," *MLQ*, November 25 and December 9; Arthur M. Eastman, "Johnson's Shakespeare and the Laity," *PMLA* for December; Edward Hart, "Some New Sources of Johnson's *Lives*," *PMLA* for December; Arthur Sherbo, "Dr. Johnson on Macbeth: 1745 and 1765" [an analysis of various changes], *RES*, January 1951; W.K. Wimsatt, Jr., "Samuel Johnson and Dryden's *Du Fresnoy*," *SP* for January 1951; A.D. Atkinson, "A Johnson Conversation" [about Juvenal], *N&Q* for February 17; Donald and Mary Hyde, "Johnson and Journals" [all about Johnson's surviving diaries], *The New Colophon* for 1950; Robert E. Moore, "Dr. Johnson on Fielding and Richardson," *PMLA* for March.

A few related topics are : Colin J. Horne, "Boswell, Burke, and the 'Life of Johnson'" [the sale of the *Life*], *N&Q*, November 11, 1950; Robert Stevenson, "'The Rivals' -- Hawkins, Burney, and Boswell," *Musical Quarterly* for January 1950; Wilbur Dunkel, "On Reading an Old Letter" [from Mrs. Piozzi], *Univ. of Rochester Library Bulletin*, Winter 1951.

Some of Havelock Ellis's grotesque notions about Johnson are reprinted in his *From Marlowe to Shaw*, edited by John Gawsworth, with a Prefatory Letter from Thomas Hardy. Postgate's *The Conversations of Dr. Johnson* are now included in the Chiltern Library.

Your editor's *Johnsonian Studies, 1887-1950: a Survey and Bibliography* has now been published by the Univ. of Minnesota Press.

Louis Leary suggests that we call attention to Richard Rovere's comparison of H.L. Mencken and Dr. Johnson in the *New Yorker* for January 20. As Leary comments, "It ups HLM considerably."

Hubert Miller sends us a copy of the catalogue of *The Old Print Shop* (New York) for March 1951, with a long section devoted to "Boswell's London." In the recent book catalogue of Colin

Richardson (London) there is a considerable section on "Boswell and Johnson." Obviously the dealers expect to make hay while the Boswell sun shines. More power to them!

The attempt by A.L. McLeod, in *N&Q* for January 20, to ascribe to Johnson an attack on Gay's epitaph, which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1738, does not appear to be at all credible. Fritz Liebert, we know, has written in rebuttal to the *N&Q*, so that there is no need for us to go into details here. When the entire passage is examined (McLeod only gives part), the style appears to be not particularly Johnsonian and there are certain passages which run entirely counter to Johnson's known point of view. Indeed, there seems to be no valid evidence to connect Johnson with the piece.

Albert Hall Johnson sends us an article by Mariano de Vedia y Mitre, "El Doctor Johnson y La Obsession de la Muerte" in *La Nation* (Buenos Aires), January 21, 1951. Maurice Quinlan comments that the author seems familiar with various books on Johnson and draws upon them sensibly. Quinlan adds: "The writer does make the interesting distinction that while Johnson did not wish for annihilation, his fear of death might have led him to wish that he had never been born."

### Some Recent Articles

What follows is a listing of various articles we have come across in our reading: it makes no attempt to be exhaustive for the period covered. But since many readers who are away from large libraries have written that they find these listings valuable, we continue the practice.

Concerned with Dryden are Eugene R. Purpus, "Some Notes on a Deistical Essay Attributed to Dryden," *PQ*, July 1950; E.A. Horsman, "Dryden's French Borrowings," *RES*, October 1950; "John Dryden, Poet" [ostensibly a review of the new Noyes edition], *TLS*, February 16, 1951; W.R. Keast's bibliographical review of Samuel Monk's Dryden list, *MP*, February 1951 (contains additional items); A.L. Korn, "MacFlecknoe and Cowley's *Dauides*," *HLQ*, February 1951.

Generally having to do with early 18th-century figures are A.L. Cooke and Thomas B. Stroup, "The Political Implications in Lee's *Constantine the Great*," *JEGP*, October 1950; John Loftis, "Richard Steele's Censorium," *Huntington Library Quart.*, Novem-

ber 1950, "Richard Steele and the Drury Lane Management," *MLN*, January 1951; "The Blenheim Papers and Steele's Journalism, 1715-18," *PMLA*, March 1951; Howard P. Vincent, "John Rich and the First Covent Garden Theatre," *JHI*, December 1950; Robert Halsband, "Addison's *Cato* and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu," *PMLA*, December 1950; Robert D. Horn, "The Early Editions of Addison's *Campaign*," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of the Univ. of Virginia*, 1950-51; Andrew M. Wilkinson, "Defoe's 'New Discovery' and 'Pacificator,'" *N&Q*, November 11, 1950; Arthur Secord, "Defoe in Stoke Newington," *PMLA*, March 1951; A.L. McLeod, "Notes on John Gay," *N&Q*, January 20, 1951; John Robert Moore, "Milton Among the Augustans: The Infernal Council," *SP*, January 1951; Samuel Kliger, "The Neoclassical View of Old English Poetry," *JEGP*, October 1950; A. Sanford Limouze, "Doctor Gaylard's *Loyal Observer Reviv'd*," *MP*, November 1950; J.R. Moore, "Gay's Burlesque of Sir Richard Blackmore's Poetry," *JEGP*, January 1951; R. Quintana, "Samuel Butler: a Restoration Figure in a Modern Light," *ELH*, March 1951; F. Cordasco, "James Forrester's 'Polite Philosopher' (1735): an Addition to the Bibliography of the Theophrastian Character," *N&Q*, February 17.

For the later period there are Norman Sykes, "Bishop Butler and the Church of His Age," *Durham Univ. Journal*, December 1950; Donald M. Foerster, "Scottish Primitivism and the Historical Approach," *PQ*, July 1950; Jackson J. Campbell, "Sir David Dalrymple's Ballad Work," *PQ*, July 1950; "Dr. Grainger's 'Sugar Cane,'" *TLS*, February 15, 1951 (much the same information had been given by G.S. Alleman in *TLS* a number of years ago); Herbert W. Starr, "John Gardiner's Imitations of Gray's Odes," *N&Q*, November 25 and December 9, 1950; W.H. Howse, "Literary Tastes in 1797," *N&Q*, December 9, 1950; Bertrand H. Bronson, "Chattertoniana," *MLQ*, December 1950; Wilson M. Hudson, "Ossian in English before Macpherson: Harmer's *Chronicle of Ireland*, 1623," *Univ. of Texas Studies in English*, 1950, and "The Homer of the North Translates Homer," *The Library Chronicle*, Fall 1950; Carl B. Cone, "Edmund Burke's Library," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, Second Quarter, 1950; David V. Erdman, "Lambeth and Bethlehem in Blake's Jerusalem," *MP*, February 1951; Warren Ramsey, "*Voltaire and Homer*," *PMLA*, March 1951.

For those interested in the novel there are Frank Kermode, "Richardson and Fielding," *Cambridge Journal*, November 1950;

F. Cordasco, "An Unrecorded Medical Translation by Smollett," *N&Q*, November 25, 1950; R.D. Spector, "Late Neo-classical Taste," *N&Q*, January 6, 1951; Wayne Booth, "Did Sterne Complete *Tristram Shandy*," *MP*, February 1951; "The Dashing Sterne," *TLS*, March 2, 1951.

A valuable bibliographical article which contains much about 18th-century matters is William B. Todd, "Observations on the Incidence and Interpretation of Press Figures," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of the Univ. of Virginia*, 1950-51.

## Book Notes

The Princeton Univ. Press has arranged to be the American agent for Blackwell in Oxford in handling the Shakespeare Head Swift Edition under the general editorship of Herbert Davis. Volume VII, *The History of the Four Last Years of the Queen*, with an Introduction by Harold Williams, has just been published.

The Harvard Univ. Press announces that it will sell in this country the excellent volumes of the Reynard Library. Johnson, Goldsmith and Sterne are already printed. Dryden is promised soon.

We are pleased to receive a copy from Macmillan of the new historical novel *Jenkins' Ear*, by Odell and Willard Shepard. Since the whole story is told by Horace Walpole, whose prejudices concerning Samuel Johnson are well known, one cannot expect to find much sympathetic about the Great Cham. But we gather from others that it is a fascinating tale, well told. A Book-of-the-Month Club selection, it gives further evidence of the fact that this celebrated Club has gone eighteenth century — what with the Boswell Journal and now *Jenkins' Ear*.

That useful little handbook *Augustans and Romantics, 1689-1830*, by H.V.D. Dyson and John Butt, has been reissued in a second edition by The Cresset Press. Although the Introduction remains substantially unchanged, some changes and additions have been made in the bibliography to bring it up to date. Unpretentious though it may be, it is a valuable tool to have around, as your editor gladly bears witness.

Norman Nicholson, we hear, has written a new book about William Cowper. To be published by John Lehmann, it will be largely concerned with the development of Cowper the poet.

## Dr. Johnson and Fanny Burney

One of our most delightful sources of information about Johnson the agreeable companion, the lady's man, has been the famous D'Arblay Diary. Specialists have always known that the printed version of the diary was carefully censored by Mme. D'Ambley before her death, and possibly by the Victorian editors. Thus the search for the original manuscript of the diary was one of the first considerations of many a Johnsonian enthusiast. Yet for many years it remained hidden, lost in a cloud of false rumors, of stories of its tragic burning, etc. Only very recently has a large portion of the diary finally found a permanent resting place in the great Berg Collection of the New York Public Library, where scholars can see what Fanny originally wrote, not merely what she wished the Victorian public to read.

One of the major problems for John Gordan, the Director of the Berg Collection, is the manner in which this great treasure should be made available to a wider public. It is no easy problem, and cannot be solved immediately. So we must all have patience and await his decisions. Meanwhile, however, Joyce Hemlow (McGill) has given us some excerpts from the excised passages, enough to make our mouth water. She published them in "Dr. Johnson and Fanny Burney — Some Additions to the Record" in the *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* for February 1951. One amusing passage we can't resist quoting, since it has to do with an old friend of ours:

"Mrs. Thrale, perhaps, might have interfered: but a very provoking accident happened to herself. She had called for a Tumbler of water, & the Butler, by mistake, gave her a Tumber of champagne: but she drank it entirely off without finding out what she was about. For she does everything with that sort of impetuosity, — but the moment she had finished, she called out what is it you have given me? — & she grew so extremely frightened when she found it was champagne, that she did nothing but terrify herself, & swallow water, Glass after Glass, all Dinner Time. And that occupied her so entirely, that she could attend to nothing at all else. Otherwise ~~she~~ might perhaps have had power to call them to order."

This priceless side-light on the famous dinner at Streatham when Johnson browbeat Pepys over the Life of Lyttelton is merely a sample of what is in store for us when the D'Arblay diary can be published uncensored.